

Adult Literacy Contact Centre NEWSLETTER



February 1991

Volume 4, Number 2

A project of the Adult Basic Education Association of B.C.

1990/1991 Regional Learner Events

Regional Learner Events, one of the 1990/91 cost-shared projects between the Ministry of Advanced Education, Training and Technology and the National Literacy Secretariat, has announced funding for 29 B.C. projects this year.

Patty Bossort, coordinator of the events (a partnership between the Adult Basic Education Association of B.C. and Selkirk College), says the committee received applications for more funds than in the previous two years, and had to cut budgets for the first time. Four projects were rejected because they did not meet the definition of a literacy learner event.

The goals of the events are to: support learners in the planning, organization and delivery of learners' events in B.C. communities; solicit and approve applications for events; and prepare and distribute a summary report when the events are completed. According to Bossort, the events "are an opportunity for learners to talk about their needs, goals, experiences and problems." Project guidelines stipulate that events must be planned by and for learners and learners must represent at least 50% of event planning committees. Bossort adds the committee plans to rewrite the guidelines for administration of learner event funds in plain language next year.

Learner events for 1990/91 are:

Carnegie Learning Centre, Vancouver

Event: Sharing Our Words

Contact: Lex Baas, 665-3013

College of New Caledonia, Prince George

Event: Community Adult Education Day

Contact: Maree Thair, 562-2131 local 281

Delta Continuing Education (School District)

Event: Beyond the Classroom

Contact: Betty Mackie, 943-0293

East Kootenay Community College, Cranbrook

Event: East Kootenay Literacy Learners' Conference

Contact: Lorrie Lane, 489-2751

Fraser Valley College Regional Prison Camps and Fraser Regional Correctional Centre, Maple Ridge

Event: "Marks on Paper"

Contact: Nada Traison, 462-9313, local 319

Fraser Valley East Literacy Association, with Fraser Valley College, Fraser Valley Regional Library, and School District #33, Chilliwack

Event: Coping with Learning Disabilities: a Community Strategy

Contact: Gail Newby, 858-4913

H.E.A.L.-H.I. (Help Empower the Adult Learner who is Hearing Impaired), Victoria

Event: Deaf Awareness

Contact: Denise Chow, 474-9801

I-CARE (Individualized Community Adult Reading Education), Douglas College, Port Coquitlam

Event: Social Awareness

Contact: Shirley Duemo, 941-0061

Kwantlen College Adult Basic Education, Surrey

Event: Workshops

Contact: Elizabeth Bordeaux, 599-2964

L.I.F.F.E. (Literacy is Freedom For Everyone), Project Literacy Williams Lake and Cariboo College

Event: Learners Talking

Contact: Debbie DeMare, 398-8400 or Shanon Doncaster, 392-2560

Literacy Learners Movement of Kelowna

Event: [No name as yet]

Contact: Ken Reich or Maureen Stephens, 861-8002

continued on page 2

*"Events" continued from p. 1***Malaspina College, Duncan**

Event: Learners Speak Out
Contact: Kate Nonesuch,
748-2591

Malaspina College Literacy Classes, Nanaimo

Event: Educators Aware!
Contact: Lynn Hunter,
753-3245, local 2265

Nicola Valley Institute of

Technology, ABE/Literacy Class,
Merritt

Event: [no name yet]
Contact: Susan Strachan,
378-2251

North Island College, Courtenay

Event: [no name yet]
Contact: Gillian Summers,
Colleen Ferguson, 334-8930

North Island College, Port Alberni

Learner Event Planning
Committee

Event: Learners Discovering
Skills and Exploring
Opportunities

Contact: Viola Ward, 724-8709

North Island College Adult Basic

Education, Port Hardy

Event: Learn and Overcome
Contact: Pat Corbett, 949-7912

Northwest Community College Basic

Literacy Program and Project
Literacy, Prince Rupert

Event: Workshop on Learning
Disabilities

Contact: Wendy Abbott,
624-6060

PALS Program, Stelly's Secondary

School, Brentwood Bay

Event: Lifeline

Contact: Dr. Lloy Falconer,
652-3122

Project Literacy Abbotsford-Matsqui

Event: Learner Networking
Project: Learners Helping
Learners

Contact: Wendy Watson,
853-7441

Project Literacy Houston

Event: Learners' Conference
Contact: Marilyn Hinton,
845-2787

Project Literacy Prince George

Event: "Marks on Paper"
Contact: Murry Krause,

561-1040

Project Literacy Victoria

Event: Learners Play
Contact: Dianna Drake,
479-3417 or 381-3744

Project Read, Fernie

Event: Literacy for Everyone
Contact: Mary Shier, 423-4691
or 423-4033

Salvation Army Correctional and Justice Services

Event: Tutor-Learner Match-
up

Contact: Lynda Sampson,
792-8581

Stellaquo Literacy Committee, Fraser Lake

Event: The Problems of
Illiteracy in an Indian
Community

Contact: Patrick Michell,
699-8749

The Write Place, Malaspina College, Parksville

Event: Open Minds Open
Doors

Contact: Pat LaPalme, 248-4041
or Linda Perkins, 248-2096

Valley Learning Centre ABE,

Crescent Valley, with Grand
Forks Learning Centre ABE

Event: Speak-out 1991
Contact: Wendy Tagami,
359-7564 or Leora Gresser,
442-2704

William E. Lucas Centre, North Vancouver

Event: Our Turn to Speak Up
Contact: Lynda Woodhead,
987-3086 or 986-8888 □

Reminder: if you received a form this month asking for your input for the "Community Partnerships in Literacy Training" project, please send it by March 28 to:

Barbara Bate
Fraser Valley College
45600 Airport Road
Chilliwack, B.C.
Phone: 792-0025
Fax: 792-2388

"Partnerships" -- one of last year's cost-shared projects -- is preparing a guide to assist community groups in designing their own literacy programs.

Plain Language Institute

An organization founded in April last year is working to promote the use of "plain language" within B.C.'s legal community.

The Plain Language Institute of British Columbia, under Executive Director Phil Knight, has a mandate to "promote public access to justice and understanding of the law [by providing] leadership in the use of plain language in government, business and the legal community so that people can easily understand the communications, documents and processes that are important to them."

The Institute has a 13-member Board of Directors, appointed by the Attorney-General for a three-year term, who represent government, business, law and education. The adult education community is represented by Joan Acosta of Capilano College, English as a second language instructor and editor of the Westcoast Reader.

The Institute was created out of the Justice Reform Commission chaired by Deputy Attorney-General Ted Hughes which toured the province in 1989 and heard submissions from the public on justice accessibility. Also

continued on page 3

ABEABC Conference Update

Grace Mirehouse of Vancouver's Native Education Centre and Don Fiddler of the En'owkin Centre in Penticton will be speakers at the 1991 conference and annual general meeting of the Adult Basic Education Association of B.C., April 10-13 in Prince Rupert. The conference theme is "Program Design and Development: Meeting the Needs of the Learner." For more information, contact program committee chair Marie Grindstrand in Prince Rupert.

Phone: 684-6054
Fax: 624-4920

"Language" continued from p. 2

known as the "Hughes Report," or the "Access to Justice" initiative, the commission recommended that "the language of the law should be made simpler," explains Knight. The Justice Ministry set up a committee to develop strategies, and as a result, the Plain Language Institute was created in April, 1990.

The Institute defines plain language as that which is "oriented to process rather than criteria; and ...succeeds in communicating the intended message to the intended audience." The Institute's five main categories of activity are: education; networking and resource development; research; writing; and promotion. It plans to work with other agencies, such as with the Continuing Legal Education Society of B.C. in developing a writing course for lawyers. Other potential strategies include a provincial plain language newsletter, an annual plain language conference, a computer database of resources and a plain language resource library.

Knight says the Institute will conduct a needs assessment, under Director of Research Nancy Harwood, and a market study to assess consumer attitudes and demand for plain language. "The strategy is to talk to institutions — lawyers, clients — to determine the areas of the law where there is the broadest public concern and the greatest need. This will be supplemented by a public opinion survey... to examine the measure of satisfaction with the language of communications."

"If we discover, for instance, that people respond better to a lawyer who is concerned with plain language," says Knight, "then we will have a major tool to promote plain language to the legal community. We will be able to go to lawyers with results." He adds the needs assessment "will provide a blueprint for our research for the next two years."

Knight, a lawyer who was called to the bar in 1983, practiced family law

in Manitoba and was Executive Director of the Community Legal Education Association in Winnipeg from 1985-90. He became Executive Director of the Plain Language Institute of British Columbia in November, 1990. "My involvement with plain language grows out of my concern with access to justice issues — with making justice open and accessible — more modern," he says.

Knight is also a newly-elected member-at-large on the board of Literacy B.C. □

Next Year's Cost-Shared Forms Ready

Grant application forms for 1991/92 literacy cost-shared projects between the Ministry of Advanced Education, Training and Technology and the National Literacy Secretariat were distributed this month by the MAETT.

Provincial Literacy Coordinator Norma Kidd says forms were sent to all B.C. college presidents; adult basic education coordinators of college and school board ABE programs; contact persons from 1990/91 cost-shared projects; and to Literacy B.C. The distribution included an information package detailing the criteria, guidelines and conditions for applications.

In B.C., colleges, school districts and registered non-profit organizations are eligible for funding, and all applications must be submitted through a community college. The guidelines state that "all eligible applicants will be considered, based on the criteria for the grants, as well as needs and priorities at the national, provincial, regional and local level, the total requests received and the funds available." (For 1990/91, 33 projects representing 13 college regions were funded.)

continued on page 4

Regina Library Tutors

The Regina Public Library's volunteer literacy tutoring program is the subject of a free breakfast meeting open to the public on Sunday, April 14 at the Hotel Vancouver. The event, part of the B.C. Library Association's Library-Literacy Link project, will be held in conjunction with the BCLA's annual spring conference.

Guest speaker Lorraine Hladik, head of adult services at the RPL, will offer practical information about recruiting volunteers and learners, tutor training, promotion, collections, computers and funding. The Regina Public Library was the 1990 recipient of the Movement for Canadian Literacy's "Canadian Literacy Service Award."

Members of literacy groups, library trustees, librarians interested in starting or supporting local literacy programs, learners, tutors and other non-librarians are welcome. Registration is open until March 18. Contact Thomas Quigley, Convenor, Vancouver Public Library, 665-3594, or Marianne Hall, Surrey Public Library, 596-7401. □

Adult Literacy Contact Centre Newsletter

622 - 510 West Hastings Street

Vancouver, B.C. V6B 1L8

1-800-663-1293 Toll-free in B.C.

684-0624 Lower Mainland

684-8520 Facsimile

The Adult Literacy Contact Centre is a project of the Adult Basic Education Association of B.C. and is jointly funded by the Ministry of Advanced Education, Training and Technology; and the National Literacy Secretariat.

The Centre welcomes receiving your literacy news by phone, fax or mail. We reserve the right to edit written submissions for the newsletter.

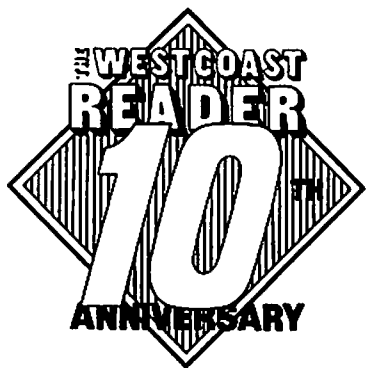
The newsletter is published monthly and distributed on the last working day of the month. It is available free of charge to any individual or agency upon request.

"Cost-shared" continued from p. 3

Criteria for cost-shared eligibility include:

- * Research, including needs assessment, evaluation and research on delivery/instruction methods, target groups, etc.
- * Pilot projects
- * Development and publishing of materials and curriculum
- * Awareness targeted to particular groups, regions or communities
- * Information-sharing and partnerships to enhance program delivery and related services

This year's deadline for applications is March 29, 1991. Forms must be returned both to the Ministry and the National Literacy Secretariat, Department of Multiculturalism and Citizenship. Copies of the application form may be obtained upon request from the Contact Centre, or from the B.C. and Yukon Region, Secretary of State, 1200 - 800 Burrard Street, Vancouver, B.C., V6Z 2N5, phone 666-6619. □



Westcoast Reader's 10th Year

A selection of 30 student writings celebrating the tenth anniversary of the Westcoast Reader, will be on display during the 24th annual conference of the Association of B.C. Teachers of English as an Additional Language (TEAL) March 14-16 in Vancouver.

The Westcoast Reader, edited by Joan Acosta, Capilano College English as a second language instructor, is a newspaper for beginning adult readers directed towards both English as a second language and literacy students. Published eight times a year, it currently has a circulation of 65,000 distributed throughout B.C. The March issue will publish two pages of selected writing by the newspaper's readers as an anniversary project.

Acosta says more than 250 students submitted entries to the project and each will receive a copy of the "Oxford Learner's Pocket Dictionary" from a donation of \$2000 by the TEAL Charitable Foundation. "The writing that was entered came from both ESL and literacy students, including some high school and upper elementary students," says Acosta. "The submissions really reflected the readership of the Reader; it was very diverse."

In addition to the display, the Reader will honour four of its supporting agencies on the opening night of the TEAL conference (March 14). Plaques will be presented to representatives from the Vancouver Foundation, Pacific Press, the Ministry of Advanced Education, Training and Technology and Capilano College. □

Native Literacy Report

The Native Literacy Research Report, a 114 page document produced by the Native Adult Education Resource Centre at Okanagan College, Salmon Arm, is now available through the Open Learning Agency. The report was written by Don Sawyer, Curriculum Director at the Resource Centre and Carmen Rodriguez, a former literacy instructor with the Resource Centre and Douglas College, and currently a literacy

instructor at Simon Fraser University. It is the product of a (1989/90) cost-shared project between the Ministry of Advanced Education, Training and Technology and the National Literacy Secretariat.

The report documents the results of a survey conducted with Native potential literacy learners in several B.C. communities, combined with a review of research and illustrative programs. Fifty-six potential learners were asked about such questions as past barriers that interfered with learning how to read and write, preferred learning environments, and current barriers to participation in literacy programs. The report combines the survey results with information on current theory and successful practices in the field, and offers guidelines useful to Native literacy programmers and instructors.

Sawyer says he found working on the report "crystallized a lot of ideas" for him. "It confirmed my belief that for [literacy] programs to be truly effective, they must be student/learner centred," he says. "It's so important to understand the diversity of needs, expectations and backgrounds." He adds that he "had only a detached understanding of the issues" until the results of the survey came in, and now that the report is complete he has "a sense of turning new ground."

Copies of the report (Order No. VA0106) are available from:

Provincial Curriculum Publications
Marketing Department
Open Learning Agency
P.O. Box 94000
Richmond, B.C. V6Y 2A2
Phone: 660-2190
Fax: 660-2272 □